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REPORTS TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Report of the Administrator

PURPOSE

The present report is prepared in compliance with General Assembly resolutions 50/120 and 47/199 and Economic and Social Council resolutions 1997/52, 1997/59 and 1997/61. As in previous years, the report has been prepared in a common format agreed to by the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Food Programme.

EXECUTIVE BOARD ACTION

The Executive Board may wish to take note of the present report and transmit it, with its comments, to the Council.

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I. FOLLOW-UP TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS 47/199 OF 22 DECEMBER 1992 AND 50/120 OF 20 DECEMBER 1995 AND FOLLOW-UP TO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1997/59 OF 11 JULY 1997: OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION: FOLLOW-UP TO POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1. UNDP actively pursued, during 1997, the follow-up to the implementation of the above resolutions, which were strongly reinforced by the Secretary-General's programme for reform introduced in two stages as Track I (March 1997) and Track II (July 1997 - see document A/51/950). The reform programme covers all aspects of United Nations operations and represents "the most extensive and far-reaching reforms in the 52-year history of the Organization".

2. While focusing on the follow-up to the above resolutions, the present report will include the implications of relevant provisions of the Secretary-General's reform programme as they affect operational activities for development. UNDP is strongly committed to and engaged in implementing the reform programme: for example, the Administrator chairs the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) and its Executive Committee and UNDP continues to be manager and funder of the resident coordinator system. UNDP also funds and provides the Director and most of the staff of the United Nations Development Group Office (DGO), which acts as secretariat to the UNDG and provides support to the resident coordinator system. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) have seconded staff to DGO as associate directors. Such secondments have been strongly recommended within UNDG and other UNDG members are expected to follow suit.

3. Finally, through its mandates given by the Executive Board and its programme and administrative activities at the country and at headquarters levels, UNDP continues to serve as a unifying and supportive force for the United Nations system as a whole in achieving poverty eradication and sustainable human development (SHD).

A. Programme matters

Field coordination: the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)

4. UNDP attributes great importance to UNDAF in view of its potential for accelerating the harmonization of United Nations system programming and responses to country needs. UNDAF will provide the United Nations system with a framework for strategic analysis, more effective provision of development assistance consistent with national priorities and mandates, and help to achieve greater impact at the country level.

5. Together with other UNDG members, UNDP has actively participated in and supported the UNDAF process over the past year, both at headquarters and country levels. Activities have included reviews and policy discussions at the Programme Management Oversight Committee (PMOC), guidance to country teams and resident coordinators, support to the preparation of the provisional guidelines, including a core set of indicators, identification of organizational focal

points and facilitators, and the use of human, technical and financial resources to sustain active participation in the process at the country level. Efforts are also ongoing to improve coordination and communication on UNDAF within headquarters as well as to expand support to UNDP country offices participating in the pilot phase.

6. A distinctive and especially valuable source of UNDP support for UNDAF has been through its management of the resident coordinator system. In line with the Secretary-General's reform initiatives, the resident coordinator system is playing a vital role in mobilizing the United Nations system and UNDG, in particular, towards common objectives by providing the authority and mechanisms for coordinated action. In recognition of this, UNDP has already made numerous investments to improve the effectiveness of the resident coordinator system and is committed to its continued strengthening in the future. UNDP also expects that the follow-up to UNDAF and other activities aimed at the harmonization of policies and procedures will place greater demands on the resident coordinator system, necessitating close monitoring of performance and additional measures to enhance its role in field-level coordination.

7. UNDP is of the view that the longer-term success of UNDAF will depend on the quality of the product itself and the extent to which its substance is reflected in the programming processes of individual United Nations entities. For this to happen, UNDAF will need a strong conceptual basis for problem analysis and strategy development - UNDP believes that within the overarching aim of poverty eradication, SHD provides a solid foundation in this respect, as does the integrated follow-up to the United Nations conferences; UNDAF must also aim to be more inclusive of all United Nations bodies, including the specialized agencies; more work will have to be done on the harmonization of programming policies and procedures as well as of administrative and financial management; and substantive collaboration at the level of interventions will need to increase, for example, through greater use of collaborative programmes. There must also be substantial simplification of both individual and collaborative programming instruments and procedures.

8. UNDAF must also provide an opportunity for the United Nations to look outwards, at the role, relevance and efficacy of its presence as a member of the development community, in view of the priorities, efforts and achievements of other actors. UNDAF should increasingly help us to situate the United Nations within the national development community and promote greater efforts towards defining and building-up core competencies. It should also help to strengthen the dialogue with other development partners, including donors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international financial institutions (IFIs), in ways that reinforce the resident coordinator system leadership role within the United Nations system at the country level.

9. The governing bodies (i.e., the Executive Board and the Economic and Social Council) may wish to note the potential of UNDAF to promote the harmonization of United Nations programme activities at the country level and to encourage strongly the implementation of UNDAF by UNDP and other United Nations entities, through the resident coordinator system.

Field coordination: the resident coordinator system

10. The reform programme of the Secretary-General has reaffirmed UNDP's role as manager and funder of the resident coordinator system. The strengthening of the resident coordinator system continues to receive close and active attention from UNDP. A number of measures have been taken or supported to enable the resident coordinator system to play a more effective role in operational activities for development through collaborative programming around key themes. The efficiency of the operational activities of the United Nations system at the country level envisioned in the United Nations reform process have also been enhanced through measures taken to strengthen the resident coordinator system.

11. UNDP has continued to widen the pool for the selection of resident coordinators. For example, 30 per cent of the 1997 resident coordinator appointments were from United Nations organizations other than UNDP. UNDP has been an active member of the UNDG Working Group on Resident Coordinator Matters. This Group has examined ways to improve the resident coordinator selection process. In this context, UNDP will lead an inter-agency group to develop a competency assessment model for selection of resident coordinators. UNDP is also preparing a separate and distinct job description for resident coordinators for the UNDG to consider. The Administrator wrote to all resident coordinators in 1997 to provide guidance for implementing the Secretary-General's reform initiatives.

12. Based on many interviews with resident coordinators and other stakeholders of the resident coordinator system, UNDP led the development of a draft set of resident coordinator competencies to be used for appraisal purposes. These competencies, after wide circulation and comment, were approved by the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ). They provide the basis for the competency-based system for the appraisal of resident coordinators being piloted to assess 1997 performance. It is an exception-based system, through which members of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) will comment on the performance of those resident coordinators who exceed or fail to meet fully the expectations established in the resident coordinator competency set. This pilot experience will be used to identify development and other management needs and will provide a basis for the broadening of the appraisal process to include the United Nations country team.

13. In view of the increasing number of first-time resident coordinators from other ACC organizations, UNDP has further strengthened its commitment to providing training and briefing on the roles, responsibilities and accountability in the several functions which they are called upon to perform. A two-week induction programme for first-time resident coordinators is available, to which has been added organized briefings with United Nations offices, funds and programmes. This programme, organized by UNDP, is delivered in close collaboration with the United Nations, the Development Group Office (DGO), CCPOQ and a number of individual funds, programmes and specialized agencies. In 1997, 12 resident coordinators participated in this annual programme, including four staff new to UNDP. Since 1994, this induction programme has been provided to 69 first-time resident coordinators, including 16 staff new to UNDP.

14. In order to assure that the first-time resident coordinators from other ACC organizations are fully able to draw upon the experience of their peers, and the resources and assistance of UNDP, a new programme of mentoring and training was established in 1997. Under this programme, the learning needs of resident coordinators from ACC and external organizations are individually reviewed and a plan for support agreed upon. Each individual works for several weeks in the office of an experienced resident coordinator, who then serves as a mentor on an ongoing basis. A programme of individual training and headquarters briefings is also established. Nine resident coordinators and nominees are currently being assisted.

15. The evolution of the resident coordinator role also requires that experienced resident coordinators be afforded an opportunity to develop further their competencies in future visioning and advocacy. Since 1995, UNDP has sponsored a series of workshops in conjunction with the United Nations Staff College Project on the competencies required for leadership of country-level operational collaboration within the resident coordinator system and with national and international partners. An external evaluation of the first three workshops in this series was carried out in early 1997. Post-workshop surveys and interviews concluded that the workshops strengthened the resident coordinators' abilities to provide leadership and resulted in more strategic programming.

16. Since 1995, 70 resident coordinators and 15 agency and NGO staff have participated in these workshops. Based on the recommendations of the 1997 evaluation, a redesigned workshop took place in late 1997, focusing on the competencies required for the implementation at country level of the United Nations reform process. The 1997 workshop was attended by 22 resident coordinators and 9 representatives of United Nations specialized agencies and funds, and NGOs.

17. UNDP also strongly supports the common initiatives of the resident coordinator system. In 1997, it actively participated in the redesign of the programme of workshops on management of field coordination for senior country representatives, a series which has improved teamwork within almost 100 country teams of the resident coordinator system. UNDP continues to cost share the management of this programme with the United Nations Staff College project.

18. Through JCGP, UNDP has also demonstrated its commitment to the collaborative model of coordination. Under the direction of UNDGO, with UNICEF and UNFPA, UNDP co-led the development and delivery of two training workshops for facilitators and focal points for the new UNDAF process. This joint training is seen as a model for future collaboration and further areas for common effort are under active discussion.

19. The governing bodies may wish to recognize the significant concrete measures taken by UNDP to strengthen the resident coordinator system and encourage continued efforts in this direction.

Capacity-building and national execution

20. Capacity-building is a main element of UNDP assistance. Capacity-building involves both promoting the enabling environment for institutional capacity-building and developing individual human resources. The UNDP approach to capacity-building stresses the need to create and strengthen national capacities as well as to encourage the retention and effective utilization of the capacity and skills acquired.

21. UNDP sees national execution as an important instrument for strengthening the management capabilities and technical expertise of national institutions and individuals, through learning by doing. Over the last year, UNDP has made several efforts to improve further the effectiveness of national execution and its contribution to national capacities. These include the preparation of revised procedures for national execution and for NGO execution, the development of standards and a checklist to determine capacity for execution, a technical advisory paper for capacity development, as well as new guidelines and tools for the programme approach and numerous training initiatives.

22. As the preferred modality, national execution is applied to the large majority of UNDP-supported programmes and projects. This entails full government management and accountability for the effective use of UNDP resources, through adequate substantive and financial reporting and achievement of programme/project objectives. UNDP encourages wide participation in the formulation, implementation and monitoring by civil society, including the NGO community, a wide range of national entities and United Nations specialized agencies.

23. The governing bodies may wish to recognize the further concrete progress made by UNDP to build on the synergy between capacity-building and national execution and to encourage continued strong links between these two areas in programme design and implementation.

Harmonization of programme cycles and programme procedures

24. The harmonization of programming periods has been pursued through the submission of country cooperation frameworks (CCFs) and requests for extension of current country programmes. The new successor programming arrangements allow for flexible duration of CCFs which facilitate the harmonization of programming periods. At present, 27 country programming periods are reported to be harmonized, 54 more are to be harmonized by 1999 and 31 lack a common starting date, including eight which, because of special circumstances, are not likely to be harmonized in the foreseeable future.

25. UNDP has also chaired the JCGP Sub-Group on Programme Implementation and Country-Level Management, which has addressed the harmonization of procedures at the operational level. Such harmonization is indispensable if the goals of UNDAF and closer United Nations collaboration are to be attained. Results to date include a policy on payment to government staff and a draft format for collaborative programmes/projects that is currently being tested in countries where such initiatives are being developed. Studies on the practices and procedures relating to programme or project personnel have also been made. UNDP

also served as task manager for the redraft of those chapters in the CCPOQ manual dealing with national execution and the programme approach.

26. The governing bodies may wish to recognize the contribution of UNDP through the current series of CCFs to the harmonization of programming periods as well as its contribution to harmonized procedures and to encourage further progress under the UNDG subsidiary machinery.

Monitoring and evaluation activities

27. At the request of the JCGP participants in the Inter-Agency Working Group (IAWG) UNDP organized a workshop in January 1997, in New York to present the draft of the new handbook for programme managers entitled "Results-oriented Monitoring and Evaluation". UNDP received positive feedback from the participants. The handbook was finalized during 1997, printed and widely distributed to country offices, headquarters and United Nations specialized agencies.

28. In 1997, UNDP developed and distributed the new Central Evaluation Database (CEDAB). In a windows-based easy-to-use format, CEDAB contains information relating to the evaluations of over 1,500 UNDP projects. CEDAB enables its users to research UNDP experience with different types of projects while its range of data can contribute to the design of new projects.

29. UNDP launched its new evaluation website in October 1997, allowing individuals in UNDP country offices and at headquarters to have on-line access to: (a) UNDP evaluation reports conducted by the Evaluation Office, including major findings and lessons learned; (b) UNDP evaluation methodologies; (c) information about the Evaluation Office; (d) links to other evaluation websites.

30. UNDP and the Department of Evaluation and International Audit of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency undertook a joint review of performance measurement systems of selected public sector and aid agencies. The aim of the review was to learn from others. In November 1997, the book Measuring and Managing Results: Lessons for Development Cooperation was published.

31. UNDP is part of a task force formed by the Expert Group on Evaluation of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. The task force is in charge of monitoring the goals set for 2015 by the DAC in relation to the objectives of the initiative "Shaping the 21st Century".

32. With the transfer of the strategic planning function to the new Bureau for Planning and Resource Management as a result of the implementation of UNDP 2001, the Office of Evaluation and Strategic Planning became the Evaluation Office. After an extensive consultative process within UNDP headquarters and with members of the Executive Board, the Office identified three areas of focus for its activities in 1998: knowledge and learning; methodologies and capacity development; and the conduct of strategic evaluations. Full details of the activities of the Evaluation Office are provided in the report of the

Administrator on evaluation (DP/1998/19), which will be submitted to the Executive Board at its annual session 1998.

33. The governing bodies may wish to recognize the concrete progress achieved by UNDP in the fields of monitoring and evaluation both within UNDP and through IAWG and to encourage further harmonization of procedures and activities in these areas.

Country strategy note

34. Country strategy notes (CSNs), where they exist, have been described as the demand side of development cooperation, the Government's own expression of the country's requirements for development cooperation. Prepared in full consultation with the Government, UNDAF complements the CSN where it exists, and has been described as the supply-side response by the United Nations system to the Government's identified needs for cooperation. To date, CSNs have been completed in 27 countries, with drafts prepared in 19 other countries. In 15 countries, working groups with work plans for CSN formulation have been set up. A total of 92 countries have expressed interest in the CSN. Through its management and funding of the resident coordinator system as well as through its programme activities, UNDP has facilitated the CSN process in all those countries where the Government has expressed an interest in it.

35. Draft revised CSN guidelines have been prepared by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs under the auspices of CCPOQ. These revised guidelines provide for inclusion of resource levels: the relationship to UNDAF; a consultative mechanism; identification of themes; improved monitoring and evaluation; and increased participation by the United Nations system as a whole. The new guidelines are expected to facilitate implementation of the CSN in all countries where the Government has decided to institute one.

36. The governing bodies may wish to take note of the progress achieved so far on the CSN and UNDAF and to emphasize the complementarity of the two instruments.

B. Management, personnel and finance matters (common premises and services)

37. During 1997, rent-free common premises were leased from the Governments in Algeria, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Common premises for the exclusive use of United Nations specialized agencies were constructed by the Government in Lesotho. Common premises were also rented from the Government in the Russian Federation. In addition, UNDP and UNFPA initiated action to optimize the use of space in the common premises in Uganda. Some of the premises required renovation and adaptation, which were carried out with funds provided by the United Nations agencies occupying the premises.

38. UNDP took an active part in the JCGP Sub-group on Common Premises and Services, which has the responsibility of accelerating the introduction of common premises. Meeting on a weekly basis, the representatives of UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP, supported by international real estate consultants are

preparing a methodology and operational guidelines for establishing future common premises. The sub-group has established criteria for the selection of priority countries, taking into account the provision of rent-free accommodations by Governments.

39. Bolivia, Egypt and Namibia were selected as pilot countries for applying the new criteria and conducting the initial analysis. The results will permit the refinement of methodology and of the implementation process. Approximately 10 additional countries will then be selected as "Tier I" countries for analysis, preparation of a real estate plan, including cost/benefit analysis, and possible introduction of common premises in 1998. The overall strategy calls for progressive introduction of countries as Tiers II, III and IV. It is proposed that all information relating to real estate from the JCGP agencies be organized into a single, common database.

40. On 15 September 1997, the Secretary-General announced the appointment of a United Nations Executive Coordinator for Common Services to head the Task Force on Common Services. UNDP is part of this New York-centred group, which is examining existing arrangements with a view to extending common services wherever this can result in more effective services. The first objective of this exercise is to provide cost-effective, quality and timely services on a competitive basis with full client satisfaction. The Task Force established working groups to develop proposals for each of the areas concerned: procurement; information technology; integrated management information systems; personnel services; financial services; legal services; transportation and traffic services; facilities management; printing facilities; and archives and records management.

41. The governing bodies may wish to acknowledge the concrete steps taken by UNDP and other UNDG members in establishing common premises and services and to encourage further progress in line with the Secretary-General's reform programme.

II. FOLLOW-UP TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 50/227 OF 24 MAY 1995 AND TO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1997/59 OF 11 JULY 1997: OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION: FOLLOW-UP TO POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

42. In its decision 98/3 the Executive Board established an open-ended ad hoc working group to develop a sustainable funding strategy for UNDP. The ad hoc working group will review the various funding mechanisms as well as other options to place the funding of UNDP on a predictable, assured and continuous basis, taking into account various budgetary processes in contributing countries as well as the need for more equitable burden-sharing among donor countries.

43. The working group will also develop guidelines and criteria to set funding targets for UNDP core resources based on the goals and priorities of the Programme, development needs and priorities of programme countries as identified in their country cooperation frameworks; projected core contributions, the

funding role of UNDP in the larger international development financing context; and existing long-term commitments and strategies.

44. Simultaneously, in response to Action 11 (a) of the Secretary-General's reform package and following discussions within UNDG, the Administrator has provided to the Secretary-General a proposal for multi-year funding of operational activities based on multi-year negotiated pledges with an underlying burden-sharing arrangement. The proposal is intended for informal discussion with stakeholders of the funds and programmes and incorporates comments from UNDG members.

45. The Executive Board is expected to review the progress of the working group at each of its forthcoming sessions and to adopt a decision on a sustainable funding strategy at its third regular session of 1998.

46. Recognizing these decisions and steps already taken by UNDP, the governing bodies may wish to provide guidance for similar time-bound efforts by all funds and programmes to produce strategies for funding on a predictable, assured and continuous basis, taking into account budgetary processes and the need for more equitable burden-sharing among donors.

III. FOLLOW-UP TO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1997/52 OF 23 JULY 1997: HIV/AIDS

47. Throughout 1997, UNDP has continued to work collaboratively with the secretariat of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and with other co-sponsors to respond to the development implications of the epidemic and has contributed to the work of numerous inter-agency initiatives.

48. At the country level, within the framework of United Nations Theme Groups on HIV/AIDS, efforts have been made to increase the capacity of the resident coordinator system to support an expanded response to the epidemic. Technical and financial support have also been provided for the preparation of national strategic plans addressing HIV/AIDS. At the regional level, UNDP has undertaken an evaluation of its Africa regional project on HIV and Development and in collaboration with UNAIDS and other development partners has organized a consensus-building workshop to develop the next phase of this project. A strategic plan has been prepared for the Asia and Pacific regional project on HIV and Development, and preparatory work is under way for collaborative activity between UNDP and UNAIDS in Latin America and the Caribbean, in the Arab States and in Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

49. At the global level, UNDP has participated in inter-agency working groups and has been actively involved in the preparation of activities relating to the UNAIDS Coordinated Appeal for the 1998-1999 Biennium Supplemental Funded Activities.

50. In terms of its role in advocacy, UNDP has been drawing international attention to the devastating scale of the epidemic and its potential impact upon present and future generations in the most affected countries, many of which are

in Sub-Saharan Africa, an issue highlighted in the revised UNAIDS statistics for 1997.

51. The governing bodies may wish to recognize the strong support provided by UNDP to combating HIV/AIDS both through the resident coordinator system and through its programme activities and to call for continued support to coordinated efforts in this area by United Nations entities.

IV. FOLLOW-UP TO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1997/61 OF 25 JULY 1997: INTEGRATED AND COORDINATED IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP TO MAJOR UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCES AND SUMMITS

52. As mandated by ACC and the Economic and Social Council, integrated and coordinated implementation and follow-up to recent international conferences has occurred through three inter-agency task forces - on basic social services for all, an enabling environment for economic and social development, and employment and sustainable livelihoods for all - as well as through the Inter-Agency Committee for Women and Gender Equality, which is following up on the Fourth World Conference on Women. Active in all four bodies, UNDP also chaired the working group on governance within the task force on the enabling environment. The three task forces have submitted their formal reports but are expected to continue as informal substantive networks with lead agencies.

53. The outputs of the task forces can be broadly categorized as follows: (a) identification of key elements of the national policy framework for pursuing conference goals; (b) recommendations for United Nations system programming; (c) arrangements for streamlining national reporting; (d) elaboration of statistics and indicators; (e) identification of other areas requiring attention (e.g., the role of civil society, the use of information technology); and (f) institutional arrangements for follow-up.

54. ACC reviewed the output of the task forces and placed the question of follow-up in the broader context of United Nations system reform. It stressed, inter alia, the important role for civil society and reiterated the commitment of member organizations to active follow-up, and requested subsidiary machinery, organizations and the resident coordinator system to make institutional arrangements for follow-up. In the first instance, an inter-agency workshop was convened in Turin on 11-12 December 1997 and identified country-level arrangements for follow-up of the global conferences and summits. The workshop addressed modalities of translating and implementing the policy and programmatic objectives set out in the global agendas. The workshop recommended several outputs: (a) an integrated message to country teams on the follow-up process; (b) guidelines or guidance on modalities of implementation, including on the utilization of the outputs of the task forces; and (c) the identification of measures to be taken to support activities in such fields as training, development and utilization of indicators and databases and reporting mechanisms. The 35 participants in the workshop, from all major funds, programmes and specialized agencies, the United Nations, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund were joined by one senior national official from Barbados representing the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States. The report

was presented to the Working Group of CCPOQ on 23 January for endorsement and transmittal to ACC.

55. In addition to its participation in the above, the inter-agency machinery that has provided country-level and system-wide guidelines, UNDP has actively pursued follow-up to individual international conferences within its mandated areas of activity and competence as discussed below.

56. The governing bodies may wish to recognize the outputs of the ACC-led inter-agency coordination process on integrated conference follow-up and, following the outcomes of the special session of the Council on this subject in April 1998, propose further measures to ensure continued integrated follow-up to the conferences alongside follow-up to individual conferences.

A. World Summit for Social Development

57. UNDP continues to take an active role globally and regionally in the follow-up to the World Summit on Social Development (WSSD) while maintaining its main focus at the country level. The UNDP mandate to make poverty its overriding priority has necessitated substantial restructuring of programme focus and has begun to change the nature of dialogue between country offices, Governments and civil society. The emphasis that UNDP places on the sustainable, and human aspects of development has provided an important contrasting perspective, already influential throughout the development community.

58. The analysis of country cooperation frameworks for the 1997-2000 programming cycle has provided UNDP with clear evidence of the interests of Governments in engaging with the United Nations system to address major themes of the Copenhagen Programme of Action. Important results include increased emphasis on explicit social development initiatives, such as establishing national anti-poverty strategies and targets; enhancing the sustainable livelihoods of those living in poverty; mainstreaming gender issues in development programming; and broadening the institutional base for civil society organization (CSO) cooperation with the United Nations system. UNDP has strengthened the participation of CSOs in its normative and policy-setting work. Guidelines have been finalized for NGO programme execution. A UNDP policy statement on CSOs and the information disclosure policy are important indications of this shift from representative to participatory democracy at the international level.

59. Among the concrete achievements in each of the three major WSSD themes, the Human Development Report 1997 was devoted to documenting the multidimensionality, extent, severity and complexity of global poverty, devising new ways (e.g., the human poverty index) to measure it, and to proposing feasible and affordable strategies for combating it. At the policy level, UNDP is engaged, often in partnership with other institutions of the United Nations system, in research activities on linkages between poverty reduction and gender equality and between poverty reduction and inequality, as well as in assessing the impacts of globalization on poverty and resource distribution. The Poverty Strategies Initiative (a multi-donor programme launched immediately following

WSSD) has facilitated UNDP work with over 80 countries in supporting country anti-poverty strategies in various stages of development. In partnership with UNICEF and UNFPA, UNDP has also initiated efforts in several countries to explore the feasibility of 20/20 compacts, and is involved closely in planning an international event in Hanoi in late 1998 as a sequel to the 1996 Oslo Conference on 20/20 convened by the Government of Norway.

60. The involvement of UNDP with the second major WSSD theme of employment has included active participation, at country as well as at global levels, in the Inter-Agency Task Force on Employment and Livelihoods, chaired by the International Labour Organization. UNDP led two of the seven country reviews conducted by this Task Force and presented a note on operationalizing the concept of "sustainable livelihoods" to the Task Force, recommendations from which were explicitly adopted in the framework for the country reviews and documented in the final report.

61. With regard to the third major WSSD theme, UNDP supported an International Institute for Labour Studies project on social exclusion which analysed the key processes and patterns that contribute to the exclusion of people living in poverty from markets, assets, social services, entitlements and rights, and the kind of policies that are required to avert growing marginalization and promote social integration of excluded groups.

B. United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

62. UNDP contributed actively to both the Fifth Session of the Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD) and the Nineteenth Special Session of the General Assembly on sustainable development.

63. UNDP had several strategic objectives in preparing for the CSD and the Special Session. The overall objectives were to promote and reinforce work in the UNDP areas of focus in relation to the CSD work programme, including forests, oceans, fresh water and desertification. In addition, UNDP stressed the issues of poverty and energy. A further objective was to give life to solutions to sustainable development problems and to point to concrete actions that can be taken at all levels of society. This objective was the rationale behind the exhibition on Sustainable Development in Action co-sponsored by UNDP.

64. As a contribution to the discussion of the Special Session UNDP produced a report entitled "Energy after Rio", which outlined the importance of energy for social development and poverty alleviation.

65. The UNDP global programme components on energy, forests and water were approved in 1997. These programme components develop new approaches to development activities that include or are based on natural resources. A component on food security and sustainable agriculture will be approved in 1998.

66. The newly-established Global Water Partnership (GWP) was further developed with UNDP as a key partner. The GWP will be a cornerstone in the implementation of the global programme on water as well as a source for country level operations.

67. UNDP continued its role as partner implementing agency for the Global Environment Facility and the Multilateral Fund for the Montreal Protocol. It also carried forward the work of Capacity 21, a programme designed to assist countries to build and strengthen their capacity to formulate sustainable development policies and effectively implement them. Capacity 21 is now operating in 52 countries.

68. UNDP played an active role as a member of the Inter-Agency Task Force of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests and participated in the development of the Action Programme, taking responsibility for components on financing and coordination of national forest programmes.

69. Integration of environment and natural resource management into all UNDP activities continues to take high priority. In 1997, UNDP began a process of review of programme procedures and efforts are being made to strengthen environment as a central theme in the Programme Manual, which will be issued in 1998.

70. The Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development remains an important body for the advancement of Agenda 21 and the UNCED ideals in the United Nations system. UNDP continues to participate in this and in its subcommittees on fresh water and on oceans.

C. Fourth World Conference on Women

71. In 1997, UNDP increased its policy, programme and institutional commitments to gender mainstreaming and the advancement of women. At the country level, advisory notes, CCFs and national human development reports address gender gaps in development analysis and access to resources and opportunities more frequently. Programming interventions increasingly link gender equality goals strategically to poverty eradication and sustainable livelihoods, environment regeneration and good governance and peace-building. The range of programming includes, for example, the integration of gender-mainstreaming issues and policies within poverty eradication programmes in Viet Nam, gender policy integration into all programming interventions in the United Republic of Tanzania, participation of indigenous women's groups in the follow-up to peace accords in Guatemala and facilitating legislation regarding violence against women in Moldova.

72. Through the resident coordinator system, UNDP facilitated joint United Nations specialized agency support to the preparation and implementation of national action plans for follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women. The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) is a key partner in a new pilot initiative in 10 countries for follow-up to the Conference. A special $1 million Gender Facility allocation was provided in 1997 to improve UNDP programming in 30 countries for gender equality and the advancement of women in the context of the follow-up to the Conference and to promote UNDP/UNIFEM cooperation at the country level.

73. UNDP experience and lessons learned in gender-mainstreaming contributed to the July 1997 Economic and Social Council report and discussion on mainstreaming

the gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system. The UNDP policy directive is incorporated in a guidance note on gender-mainstreaming, the result of a senior management review in March 1997 of baseline assessments in 20 countries. The guidance note highlights corporate responsibilities, outlines skill requirements and provides guidance on the programming and management dimensions of gender-mainstreaming.

74. Recognizing the importance of capacity-building for gender-mainstreaming, the Gender-in-Development Programme (GIDP) conducted subregional learning, communications and briefing (LCB) workshops in 1997 for gender focal points from UNDP and United Nations specialized agencies for countries in Eastern and Southern Africa, Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, and the Arab States. Also in 1997, a new initiative was launched with support from donors and United Nations Volunteers (UNV) to place UNV gender specialists in 20 UNDP country offices.

75. UNDP global and regional programme allocations approved in 1997 for gender equality and the advancement of women have enabled initiatives to be undertaken in, for example, a global pilot programme for the valuing of paid and unpaid labour with United Nations agency partners and cost-sharing contributions, and a research programme, in collaboration with the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development on gender and poverty indicators.

76. With regard to UNDP commitments towards gender balance within the organization, accomplishments include exceeding the 1997 target of 20 per cent women at the D-2 level. Women now constitute one third of senior managers at headquarters and the number of women Resident Representatives almost doubled from 1995. Moreover, two of the seven officials at the Assistant Secretary-General level in UNDP are now women. However, much still remains to be done in achieving overall gender targets in the medium term, which continues as a top corporate priority for UNDP.

D. International Conference on Population and Development

77. Within the overall inter-agency follow-up framework on ICPD managed by UNFPA, UNDP continues its active support for the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action at the country, regional and international levels.

78. The bulk of the UNDP contribution to ICPD implementation takes place through the organization's work to eradicate poverty and to mainstream gender equity into development policies and programmes. Given the UNDP multidimensional approach to poverty eradication, the links between the recommendations of the ICPD Programme of Action and UNDP activities to eradicate poverty are inseparable and mutually reinforcing.

79. In addition, UNDP had direct involvement in implementing specific elements of recommendations of the ICPD Programme of Action, as outlined below.

80. UNDP collaborates with the World Health Organization, UNFPA and the World Bank on the Special Programme for Research, Development and Research Training in

Human Reproduction, which completed its research priority-setting exercise in 1997.

81. In 1997, through the Special Unit for TCDC and the Regional Programme for Africa, UNDP supported the launch of the Regional Prevention of Maternal Mortality Network as a centre of excellence for the prevention of maternal deaths associated with pregnancy and childbirth in sub-Saharan Africa in collaboration with United Nations system partners, foundations and NGOs. This programme is a network of NGOs that uses capacity-strengthening, intersectoral collaboration and multidisciplinary teamwork to provide technical cooperation in capacity-building for research to other countries in the region. Many of its activities address issues of access to and quality of care.

82. UNDP has also been actively involved in ongoing discussions with United Nations system partners, bilaterals, foundations, NGOs and the private sector related to current and future health and development challenges, with a focus on equity and the poor.

E. Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)

83. UNDP activities carried out under the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) have been developed at the global, regional and national levels. At all levels, activities were developed in partnership with Governments, civil society organizations and United Nations specialized agencies. The UNDP Urban Development Cooperation Programme involves a multisectoral set of activities that cut across UNDP priority concerns with poverty eradication, employment creation and sustainable livelihoods, the empowerment of women and the protection and regeneration of the environment. All these priorities, under the overall umbrella of governance concerns, strongly interact at the human settlements level.

84. As a follow-up to the Habitat II Conference, UNDP organized the International Colloquium of Mayors, held in the context of the International Conference on Governance, which took place at United Nations Headquarters in July 1997. The largest gathering of locally elected officials held at the United Nations, the Colloquium attracted mayors and local officials from 70 countries. The focus was on managing cities in a globalizing world, on strengthening partnerships between the public sector, the private sector and civil society organizations at the local level and on promoting equity through participatory approaches in urban areas worldwide. One of the outcomes of the meeting was the establishment of the UNDP Advisory Board of Mayors.

85. Other Habitat II follow-up activities include continued UNDP support to the Urban Management Programme in Asia and the Pacific and the Asia Pacific 2000 initiative; and strengthening the contribution of civil society organizations and communities in the region to the objectives of the Habitat II Global Plan of Action.

86. UNDP has also launched the World Alliance of Cities Against Poverty, which is a global network of cities committed to the objectives of Habitat II and WSSD.

87. UNDP has supported local Agenda 21 activities in Lebanon, Malawi, Turkey, Zimbabwe and other countries, thus contributing to the integration of UNCED and Habitat II objectives.

F. World Food Summit

88. The Inter-agency Network on Rural Development and Food Security was established in November 1997 to serve as the main vehicle to promote follow-up to the World Food Summit. UNDP is an active member of the Network, which is coordinated by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). Consistent with decisions taken at the World Food Summit, the Network identified the resident coordinator system as the primary mechanism to promote cooperation among United Nations specialized agencies and bilateral agencies in food security programming at the country level. As of November 1997, food security thematic groups had been or were being established in 64 countries under the UNDP resident coordinator system to coordinate United Nations agency and bilateral food security programming.

89. UNDP has held a series of consultations with the heads of FAO departments and divisions to identify areas for global cooperation as follow-up to the World Food Summit. During consultations conducted in June 1997 at FAO headquarters, agreement was reached on collaboration in three priority areas: (a) national capacity-building within the FAO Special Programme on Food Production for Food Security in Low-Income Food Deficit Countries (SPFS); (b) building national capacity for community-based constraints analysis and development planning within and outside SPFS; and (c) national capacity-building within the Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information Mapping System (FIVIMS) Programme.

90. The World Food Summit called for international cooperation in the development of national food security action plans. UNDP participated in two panel discussions organized at FAO headquarters to review draft national agricultural strategy papers prepared by FAO. Panel papers prepared for non-African low-income food deficit countries were examined in May and strategies drafted in July for 71 non-low-income food deficit countries.

91. The World Food Summit also requested Governments, in partnership with all civil society actors, "to develop and periodically update ... a national food insecurity and vulnerability information and mapping system, indicating areas and populations ... affected by or at risk of hunger and malnutrition, and elements contributing to food insecurity". United Nations specialized agencies were requested to promote this work within the framework of ACC, with FAO to play a catalytic role. UNDP participated in two workshops to advance the design and implementation of FIVIMS. The first meeting was held in April at FAO headquarters with the objective of defining appropriate indicators of food insecurity and of developing a workplan for the initiation of FIVIMS activities. The second meeting was also held at FAO headquarters in December and constituted

the first meeting of the Inter-Agency Working Group (IAWG) on FIVIMS. UNDP was invited to chair the meeting, in which the terms of reference for the IAWG were set and draft guidelines reviewed for the implementation of FIVIMS at the national level.

92. The governing bodies may wish to recognize the concrete contributions of UNDP to the follow-up to individual conferences - particularly the World Summit for Social Development, given the overriding mandate of UNDP for the eradication of poverty - and to encourage continued coordination and balance between efforts for the follow-up to individual conferences and those relating to the integrated follow-up to conferences under the inter-agency task forces and their successor arrangements.

G. Contribution to human rights

93. UNDP recently released a corporate policy document entitled Integrating human rights with sustainable human development. Starting with the premise that poverty is an unacceptable violation of human rights, the document stresses the indivisibility and interrelatedness of all human rights.

94. Furthermore, a Memorandum of Understanding between UNDP and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights was signed on 4 March 1998 in New York setting out areas of cooperation in the technical assistance for the promotion of human rights.

95. UNDP support to the promotion of human rights can be seen on three levels. First, through its regular programmes UNDP strives to achieve the right to development as the basis for all its operational activities, in particular with regard to its overarching goal: the eradication of poverty. At the second level, UNDP responds to requests from Member States for technical assistance and capacity-building in their activities and policies to comply with international agreements, especially in the follow-up to international conferences, with regard to the promotion of all human rights - civil, political, economic, social and cultural. The third level of UNDP promotion of human rights is the mainstreaming of human rights concerns in all its programme activities. With due regard to national conditions and specificities, UNDP programmes seek whenever possible to broaden the enjoyment of human rights and to promote their realization.

V. RECOMMENDATION

96. The Executive Board may wish to:

Take note of the reports to the Economic and Social Council (DP/1998/14) and of the recommendations contained therein and decide to transmit them to the Economic and Social Council, together with the comments made by delegations at the present session.